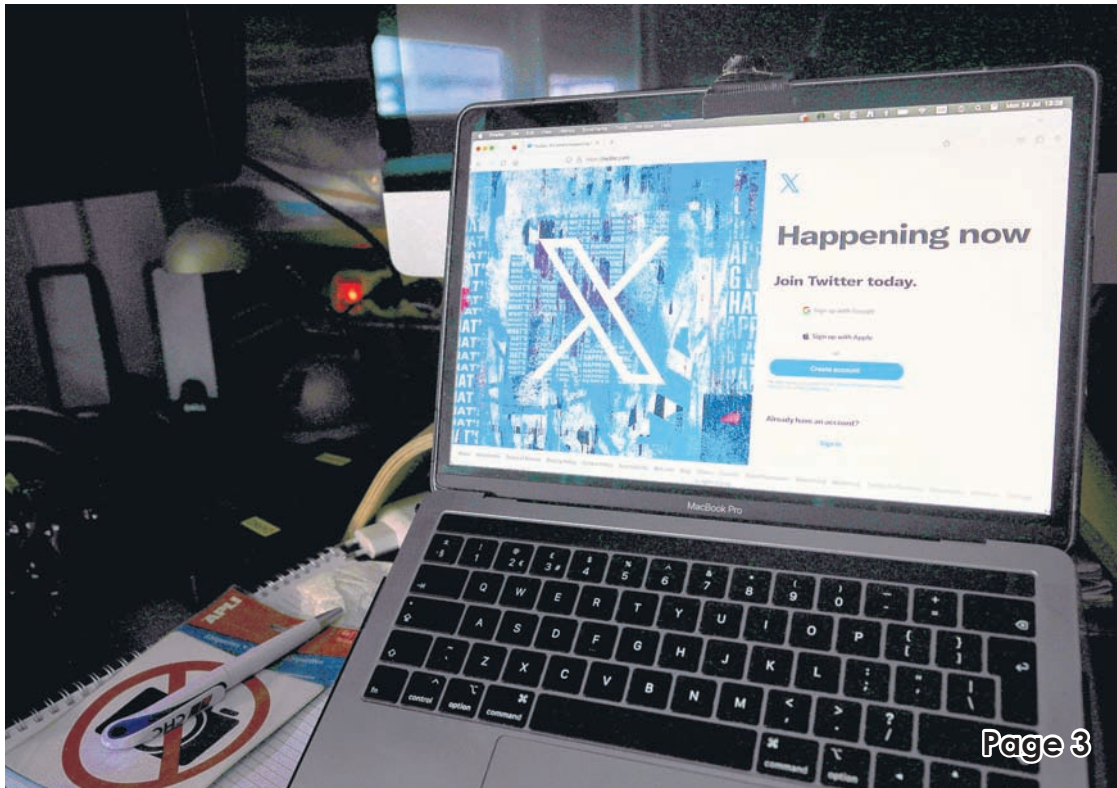


## Anonymous users are dominating right-wing discussions online



The X logo is shown on a computer screen in Belgrade, Serbia, July 24, 2023.

Associated Press



## The district of Savaneta A quick history guide to the island's first capital



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# Some states are seeking to restrict TikTok. That doesn't mean their governors aren't using it

By **BROOKE SCHULTZ**

**Associated Press/Report for America**

**HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) —**

POV: You're on TikTok, and so is your governor — even as your Legislature considers banning the app from state-owned devices and networks.

Efforts to ban TikTok over security concerns about China's influence through the platform have picked up steam in the past year in state legislatures, with an expansive ban even proposed by Congress. In Pennsylvania, forward movement on a bill that first unanimously passed the state Senate last year could send legislation to the Democratic governor's desk imminently.

But even as the app faces scrutiny and bans, governors — and even President Joe Biden — are still using the app to promote their initiatives and expand their voting pool. Their target is the youth vote, or the people who largely make up the app's U.S. user base of 170 million.

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, is a prolific poster, with his efforts beginning on the campaign trail through a personal account. The first-term is a rising star in the Democratic Party and is among governors building national profiles and possibly positioning themselves for a 2028 run for the White House.



**Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro arrives in Blue Bell, Pa., Friday, Jan. 5, 2024.**

**Associated Press**

His careful messaging extends to his official governor account on TikTok. All colored with his priorities and stances, videos have him participating in viral

trends, breaking down aspects of his budget proposal, and even taking a dig at Texas via a Beyoncé song. Other governors use TikTok accounts — among verified accounts, only Democrats — even in states that have banned the app from state devices and networks.

It isn't surprising that politicians do use TikTok so much, said Anupam Chander, visiting scholar at the Institute for Rebooting Social Media at Harvard University. It's more surprising that they don't.

Such outreach draws its lineage to President Franklin Roosevelt's fireside chats, when Depression-era Americans would gather around the radio to hear his voice. More recently, social media has been galvanized in elections, like former President Barack Obama on Facebook in 2008, or former President Donald Trump on Twitter, now X, in 2016.

"This is an app that can be very personal. You can share your walk to the Senate chambers or your exhilaration as a vote is passed. Or your disappointment when a vote fails," he said. "This is a way to reach people in a very personal way." Former GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy made early and, well, liberal use of TikTok during his campaign, with one young Republican saying his social media presence "made him popular." "A lot of younger voters seem receptive to candi-

dates such as Ramaswamy, due to his young age and new-generation agenda," Victoria Carlson, a spokesperson for the George Washington University College Republicans, told CBS News in September.

In Michigan, the app was banned in March 2023 from government devices — with certain exceptions, like Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's promotional account, which has brought cute dog videos, her March Madness bracket and news about her initiatives to her roughly 245,000 followers.

In New Jersey, a government-affiliated app posts jokes and memes. An exemption in New Jersey's law banning TikTok from government devices allows for posts from non-state networks, with permission. Other government accounts across the country have touted their state parks to drive tourism, events and small businesses.

In Pennsylvania, you have Shapiro and his steaming 'Get S—t Done' mug of tea — a nod to his edgy tagline — or slightly shaky footage as he records himself thanking teachers as his kids head back to school. As a play on the popular "point of view" videos where creators set up a scenario, Shapiro makes a concerned face with the overlaid text "POV: When extremists try to stop legal votes from counting."

"The governor believes, and this administration believes, that there should be no wrong door to accessing government," said Manuel Bonder, Shapiro's spokesperson.

TikTok is part of that landscape, he said. The administration has a phone dedicated only to making TikToks, off of state Wi-Fi, with no other apps on it, Bonder said.

A TikTok spokesperson wouldn't be quoted by name about legislation banning the app.

In 2022, researchers found more than 100 accounts for those running for Congress. □

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<p><b>SUN Violin Show</b></p>	<p><b>Nightly Watershow 7:30pm - 8:30pm - 9:30pm</b></p>

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# Anonymous users are dominating right-wing discussions online

By ALI SWENSON and MELISSA GOLDIN

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The reposts and expressions of shock from public figures followed quickly after a user on the social platform X who uses a pseudonym claimed that a government website had revealed “skyrocketing” rates of voters registering without a photo ID in three states this year — two of them crucial to the presidential contest.

“Extremely concerning,” X owner Elon Musk replied twice to the post this past week.

“Are migrants registering to vote using SSN?” Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, an ally of former President Donald Trump, asked on Instagram, using the acronym for Social Security number.

Trump himself posted to his own social platform within hours to ask, “Who are all those voters registering without a Photo ID in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Arizona??? What is going on???”

State election officials soon found themselves forced to respond. They said the user, who pledges to fight, expose and mock “wokeness,” was wrong and had distorted Social Security Administration data. Actual voter registrations during the time period cited were much lower than the numbers being shared online.

Stephen Richer, the recorder in Maricopa County, Arizona, which includes Phoenix, refuted the claim in multipleX posts while Jane Nelson, the secretary of state in Texas, issued a statement calling it “totally inaccurate.”

Yet by the time they tried to correct the record, the false claim had spread widely. In three days, the pseudonymous user’s claim amassed more than 63 million views on X, according to the platform’s metrics. A thorough explanation from Richer attracted a fraction of that, reaching 2.4 million users.

The incident sheds light on how social media accounts that shield the identities of



**Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk addresses the European Jewish Association’s conference, Jan. 22, 2024, in Krakow, Poland.**

Associated Press

the people or groups behind them through clever slogans and cartoon avatars have come to dominate right-wing political discussion online even as they spread false information.

The accounts enjoy a massive reach that is boosted by engagement algorithms, by social media companies greatly reducing or eliminating efforts to remove phony or harmful material, and by endorsements from high-profile figures such as Musk. They also can generate substantial financial rewards from X and other platforms by ginning up outrage against Democrats.

Many such internet personalities identify as patriotic citizen journalists uncovering real corruption. Yet their demonstrated ability to spread misinformation unchecked while disguising their true motives worries experts with the United States in a presidential election year.

They are exploiting a long history of trust in American whistleblowers and anonymous sources, said Samuel Woolley, director of the Propaganda Research Lab at the University of Texas at Austin.

“With these types of accounts, there’s an allure of covertness, there’s this idea that they somehow might know something that other people don’t,” he said.

“They’re co-opting the language of genuine whistleblowing or democratically inclined leaking. In fact what they’re doing is antithetical to democracy.”

The claim that spread online this past week misused Social Security Administration data tracking routine requests made by states to verify the identity of individuals who registered to vote using the last four digits of their Social Security number. These requests are often made multiple times for the same individual, meaning they do not necessarily correspond one-to-one with people registering to vote.

The larger implication is that the cited data represents people who entered the U.S. illegally and are supposedly registering to vote with Social Security numbers they received for work authorization documents. But only U.S. citizens are allowed to vote in federal elections and illegal voting by those who are not is exceedingly rare because states have processes to prevent it.

Accounts that do not disclose the identities of those behind them have thrived online for years, gaining followers for their content on politics, humor, human rights and more. People have used anonymity on social media to avoid persecution by repressive au-

thorities or to speak freely about sensitive experiences. Many left-wing protesters adopted anonymous online identities during the Occupy Wall Street movement of the early 2010s.

The meteoric rise of a group of right-wing pseudonymous influencers who act as alternative information sources has been more recent. It’s coincided with a decline in public trust in government and media through the 2020 presidential election and the COVID-19 pandemic.

These influencers frequently spread misinformation and otherwise misleading content, often in service of the same recurring narratives such as alleged voter fraud, the “woke agenda” or Democrats supposedly encouraging a surge of people through illegal immigration to steal elections or replace whites. They often use similar content and reshare each other’s posts. The account that posted the recent misinformation also has spread bogus information about the Israel-Hamas war, sharing a post last fall that falsely claimed to show a Palestinian “crisis actor” pretending to be seriously injured.

Since his takeover of Twitter in 2022, Musk has nurtured the rise of these accounts, frequently commenting on their posts and sharing their content. He also has

protected their anonymity. In March, X updated its privacy policy to ban people from exposing the identity of an anonymous user.

Musk also rewards high engagement with financial payouts. The X user who spread the false information about new voter registrants has racked up more than 2.4 million followers since joining the platform in 2022. The user, in a post last July, reported earning more than \$10,000 from X’s new creator ad revenue program. X did not respond to a request for comment, which was met with an automated reply.

Tech watchdogs said that while it’s critical to maintain spaces for anonymous voices online, they shouldn’t be allowed to spread lies without accountability.

“Companies must vigorously enforce terms of service and content policies that promote election integrity and information integrity generally,” said Kate Ruane, director of the Free Expression Project at the Center for Democracy and Technology.

The success of these accounts shows how financially savvy users have deployed the online trolling playbook to their advantage, said Dale Beran, a lecturer at Morgan State University and the author of “It Came from Something Awful: How a Toxic Troll Army Accidentally Memed Donald Trump into Office.”

“The art of trolling is to get the other person enraged,” he said. “And we now know getting someone enraged really fuels engagement and gives you followers and so will get you paid. So now it’s sort of a business.”

Some pseudonymous accounts on X have used their brands to build loyal audiences on other platforms, from Instagram to the video-sharing platform Rumble and the encrypted messaging platform Telegram. The accounts themselves — and many of their followers — publicly promote their pride in America and its founding documents. □



# Weather is the hot topic as eclipse spectators stake out their spots in U.S., Mexico and Canada

By **MARCIA DUNN**

**AP Aerospace Writer**

**MESQUITE, Texas (AP)** —

Eclipse spectators staked out their spots across three countries Sunday, fervently hoping for clear skies despite forecasts calling for clouds along most of the sun-vanishing route.

North America won't see another coast-to-coast total solar eclipse for 21 years, prompting the weekend's worry and mad rush.

Monday's extravaganza stretches from Mexico's Pacific beaches to Canada's rugged Atlantic shores, with 15 U.S. states in between.

"I have arrived in the path of totality!" Ian Kluff announced Sunday afternoon after pulling into Mesquite from Portland, Oregon, a 2,000-mile (3,200-kilometer) drive.

A total eclipse happens when the moon lines up perfectly between Earth and the sun, blotting out the sunlight. That means a little over four minutes of daytime darkness east of Dallas in Mesquite, where locals like Jorge Martinez



**Gabriel Kauffman, 4, and his brother, Theodore, 6, demonstrate a total solar eclipse at a NASA booth at the Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland, on Sunday, April 7, 2024. They live in Baltimore and came to the Cleveland area to see the eclipse with relatives.**

**Associated Press**

have the day off. The land surveyor plans to "witness history" from home with his wife and their 3-year-old daughter, Nati.

"Hopefully, she'll remember. She's excited, too," he said following breakfast at Dos Panchas Mexican Restaurant.

Inside the jammed restaurant, manager Adrian Martinez figured on staying open Monday.

"Wish it was going to be sunny like today," he said. "But cloudiness? Hopefully, it still looks pretty good."

Near Ennis, Texas, to the south, the Range Vintage Trailer Resort was also packed, selling out of spots more than a year ago.

"I booked it instantly, then I told my wife, 'We're going to Texas,'" Gotham, England's Chris Lomas said from the trailer resort Sun-

day. Even if clouds obscure the covered-up sun, "it will still go dark. It's just about sharing the experience with other people," he added.

In Cleveland, the eclipse persuaded women's Final Four fans Matt and Sheila Powell to stick around an extra day after Sunday's game. But they were debating whether to begin their drive home to Missouri Valley, Iowa, early Monday in search of clearer skies along the eclipse's path. "We're trying to be flexible," Powell said.

Even the eclipse professionals were up in the air.

Eclipse mapmaker Michael Zeiler had a perfect record ahead of Monday, seeing 11 out of 11 total solar eclipses after successfully relocating three of those times at the last minute for better weather.

"We are the complete opposite of tornado chasers, always seeking clear skies," Zeiler said in an email over the weekend. This time, though, he was staying put in Fredericksburg, Texas, with his family, 10 of them

altogether, and holding onto "a considerable ray of hope."

Farther north, in Buffalo, New York, Jeff Sherman flew in from Somerville, Massachusetts, to catch his second total solar eclipse. After seeing the U.S. coast-to-coast eclipse in 2017, "now I have to see any one that's nearby," he said.

Kluff also enjoyed clear skies for the 2017 eclipse, in Oregon, and rolled into Mesquite wearing the T-shirt from that big event. As for Monday's cloudy forecast across Texas, "at least I'll be around people who are like-minded."

Dacey weather was also predicted almost all the way to Lake Erie, despite Sunday's gorgeous weather. The only places promised clear skies along Monday's narrow 115-mile-wide (185-kilometer-wide) corridor of totality were New England and Canada.

Like everywhere else, the weather was the hot topic at the Buffalo Naval and Military Park on Sunday. □

# Many cancer drugs remain unproven 5 years after accelerated approval, a study finds

By **CARLA K. JOHNSON**

**AP Medical Writer**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's accelerated approval program is meant to give patients early access to promising drugs. But how often do these drugs actually improve or extend patients' lives?

In a new study, researchers found that most cancer drugs granted accelerated approval do not demonstrate such benefits within five years.

"Five years after the initial accelerated approval, you should have a definitive answer," said Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, a cancer specialist and bioethicist at the University of Pennsylvania who was not involved in the research. "Thousands of people are getting those drugs. That seems a mistake

if we don't know whether they work or not."

The program was created in 1992 to speed access to HIV drugs. Today, 85% of accelerated approvals go to cancer drugs.

It allows the FDA to grant early approval to drugs that show promising initial results for treating debilitating or fatal diseases. In exchange, drug companies are expected to do rigorous testing and produce better evidence before gaining full approval.

Patients get access to drugs earlier, but the tradeoff means some of the medications don't pan out. It's up to the FDA or the drugmaker to withdraw disappointing drugs, and sometimes the FDA has decided that less definitive evidence is good enough



**A sign for the Food and Drug Administration is displayed outside their offices in Silver Spring, Md., on Dec. 10, 2020.**

**Associated Press**

for a full approval.

The new study found that between 2013 and 2017, there were 46 cancer drugs granted accelerated approval. Of those, 63% were converted to regular approval even though only 43% demonstrated a clinical

benefit in confirmatory trials.

The research was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association and discussed at the American Association for Cancer Research annual meeting in San Diego on Sunday.

It's unclear how much cancer patients understand about drugs with accelerated approval, said study co-author Dr. Edward Cliff of Harvard Medical School. "We raise the question: Is that uncertainty being conveyed to patients?" Cliff said.

Drugs that got accelerated approval may be the only option for patients with rare or advanced cancers, said Dr. Jennifer Litton of MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, who was not involved in the study.

It's important for doctors to carefully explain the evidence, Litton said.

"It might be shrinking of tumor. It might be how long the tumor stays stable," Litton said. "You can provide the data you have, but you shouldn't overpromise." □



# Top U.N. court will hold hearings in a case accusing Germany of facilitating Israel's Gaza conflict

By MIKE CORDER  
Associated Press

**THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)** — Preliminary hearings open Monday at the United Nations' top court in a case that seeks an end to German military and other aid to Israel, based on claims that Berlin is "facilitating" acts of genocide and breaches of international law in the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Israel strongly denies its military campaign amounts to breaches of the Genocide Convention.

While the case brought by Nicaragua centers on Germany, it indirectly takes aim at Israel's military campaign in Gaza following the deadly Oct. 7 attacks when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel, killing some 1,200 people. More than 33,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to the territory's Health Ministry. Its toll doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants, but it has said women and children make up the majority of the dead.

"We are calm and we will set out our legal position in court," German Foreign Ministry spokesperson Sebastian Fischer said ahead of the hearings.

"We reject Nicaragua's accusations," Fischer told reporters in Berlin on Friday.



Smoke rises following an Israeli airstrike in the Gaza Strip, as seen from southern Israel, Monday, Oct. 23, 2023.

Associated Press

"Germany has breached neither the genocide convention nor international humanitarian law, and we will set this out in detail before the International Court of Justice."

Nicaragua has asked the court to hand down preliminary orders known as provisional measures, including that Germany "immediately suspend its aid to Israel, in particular its military assistance including military equipment in so far as this aid may be used in the violation of the Genocide Convention" and international law.

The court will likely take weeks to deliver its preliminary decision and Nicaragua's case will probably drag on for years.

Monday's hearing at the

world court comes amid growing calls for allies to stop supplying arms to Israel as its six-month campaign continues to lay waste to Gaza.

The offensive has displaced the vast majority of Gaza's population. Food is scarce, the U.N. says famine is approaching and few Palestinians have been able to leave the besieged territory.

"The case next week in The Hague will likely further galvanize opposition to any support for Israel," said Mary Ellen O'Connell, a professor of law and international peace studies at the University of Notre Dame.

On Friday, the U.N.'s top human rights body called on countries to stop selling

or shipping weapons to Israel. The United States and Germany opposed the resolution.

Also, hundreds of British jurists, including three retired Supreme Court judges, have called on their government to suspend arms sales to Israel after three U.K. citizens were among seven aid workers from the charity World Central Kitchen killed in Israeli strikes. Israel said the attack on the aid workers was a mistake caused by "misidentification."

Germany has for decades been a staunch supporter of Israel. Days after the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas, Chancellor Olaf Scholz explained why: "Our own history, our responsibility arising from the Holocaust, makes it a perpetual task for us to stand up for the security of the state of Israel," he told lawmakers.

Berlin, however, has gradually shifted its tone as civilian casualties in Gaza have soared, becoming increasingly critical of the humanitarian situation in Gaza and spoken out against a ground offensive in Rafah. Nicaragua's government, which has historical links with Palestinian organizations dating back to their support for the 1979 Sandinista revolution, was itself accused earlier this year by U.N.-backed human

rights experts of systematic human rights abuses "tantamount to crimes against humanity." The government of President Daniel Ortega fiercely rejected the allegations.

In January, the ICJ imposed provisional measures ordering Israel to do all it can to prevent death, destruction and acts of genocide in Gaza. The orders came in a case filed by South Africa accusing Israel of breaching the Genocide Convention.

The court last week ordered Israel to take measures to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including opening more land crossings to allow food, water, fuel and other supplies into the war-ravaged enclave. On Friday, Israel said it's taking steps to increase the flow of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, including reopening a key border crossing into northern Gaza.

Nicaragua argues that by giving Israel political, financial and military support and by defunding the United Nations aid agency for Palestinians, UNRWA, "Germany is facilitating the commission of genocide and, in any case has failed in its obligation to do everything possible to prevent the commission of genocide." □

# China says it patrolled the South China Sea in an apparent response to U.S. naval drills with allies

**BEIJING (AP)** — China's military said Sunday that it had conducted air and sea patrols and that all activities that "disrupt the South China Sea" are under control, an apparent response to naval exercises by the U.S. and its allies.

The defense chiefs of the United States, Japan, Australia and the Philippines announced Saturday that they would hold joint exercises in the sea to safeguard the rule of law and uphold the right to sail through and fly over the waters.

China has long-simmering territorial disputes with a number of Southeast Asian nations in the South China Sea, a major shipping route. Skirmishes with the Philippines in particular have flared up since last year.

The U.S. has conducted joint patrols with the Philippines in a show of support. China says the U.S. is inflaming tensions by meddling in the disputes.

A brief statement from the Chinese military's Southern Theater Command said



A Filipino port worker looks as the Japanese Ship Akebono (DD-108), a Murasame-class destroyer of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, prepares to dock for a goodwill visit at Manila's south harbor, Philippines on Sept. 27, 2018.

Associated Press

it had organized patrols and that "all military activities that disrupt the South China Sea and create hot-spots are under control."

The statement did not mention the United States or the joint exercises.

Likewise, the U.S. and its allies did not mention China in their statement, but the four countries reaffirmed their stance that a 2016 international arbitration ruling — which invalidated China's expansive claims in the South China Sea — was final and legally binding. □



# International leaders condemn Ecuador after police break into the Mexican Embassy in Quito

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and GABRIELA MOLINA  
Associated Press

**QUITO, Ecuador (AP)** — The global condemnation of Ecuador's government for its decision to break into the Mexican Embassy snowballed Sunday with more presidents and other leaders expressing disapproval, shock and dismay. The criticism came as Mexico's ambassador and other personnel arrived in Mexico City on Sunday afternoon after departing Ecuador's capital, Quito, on a commercial flight. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador severed diplomatic ties with Ecuador immediately after Friday's raid, which international law experts, presidents and diplomats have deemed a violation of long-established international accords.

Police broke through the external doors of the Mexican Embassy in Quito to arrest Jorge Glas, who had been residing there since December. He had sought asylum after being indicted on corruption charges.

Mexico plans to challenge the raid at the World Court in The Hague.

The Spanish foreign ministry in a statement Sunday said, "The entry by force into the Embassy of Mexico in Quito constitutes a violation of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. We call for respect for international law and harmony between Mexico and Ecuador, brotherly countries to Spain and members of the Ibero-American community."

A day earlier, the Organization of American States in a statement reminded its members, which include Ecuador and Mexico, of their obligation not to "invoke norms of domestic law to justify non-compliance with their international obligations."

U.S. State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said "the United States condemns any violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, and takes very seriously the ob-



Police break into the Mexican embassy in Quito, Ecuador, Friday, April 5, 2024.

Associated Press

ligation of host countries under international law to respect the inviolability of diplomatic missions." He called on both countries to resolve their difference.

Honduran President Xiomara Castro, writing on X, characterized the raid as "an intolerable act for the international community" and a "violation of the sovereignty of the Mexican State and international law" because "it ignores the historical and fundamental right to asylum."

Diplomatic premises are considered foreign soil and "inviolable" under the Vienna treaties and host country law enforcement agencies are not allowed to enter without the permission of the ambassador. People seeking asylum have lived anywhere from days to years at embassies around the world, including at Ecuador's in London, which housed WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange for seven years as British police could not enter to arrest him.

Alicia Bárcena, Mexico's secretary of foreign relations, on Friday posted on the social media platform X that a number of diplomats suffered injuries during the break-in.

Bárcena said Mexico would take the case to the International Court of Justice "to denounce Ecuador's responsibility for violations of international law." She also recalled Mexican diplomats.

**GLAS IS TAKEN TO PRISON**  
On Saturday, Glas was taken from the attorney general's office in Quito to the port city of Guayaquil, where he will remain in custody at a maximum-security prison. People who had gathered outside the prosecutor's office yelled "strength" as he left with a convoy of police and military vehicles.

Glas' attorney, Sonia Vera, told The Associated Press that officers broke into his room and he resisted when they attempted to put his hands behind his back. She said the officers then "knocked him to the floor, kicked him in the head, in the spine, in the legs, the hands," and when he "couldn't walk, they dragged him out."

Vera said the defense team was not allowed to speak with Glas while he was at the prosecutor's office, and it is now working to file a habeas corpus petition.

Authorities are investigating Glas over alleged irregularities during his management of reconstruction efforts following a powerful earthquake in 2016 that killed hundreds of people. He was convicted on bribery and corruption charges in other cases.

Ecuador's Foreign Minister Gabriela Sommerfeld on Saturday told reporters that the decision to enter the embassy was made by President Daniel Noboa after considering Glas' "imminent flight risk" and exhausting all possibilities for diplomatic dialogue with Mexico.

Mexico granted Glas asylum hours before the raid. Sommerfeld said "it is not legal to grant asylum to people convicted of common crimes and by competent courts."

**ECUADOR'S PRESIDENT FACES REELECTION NEXT YEAR**

Noboa became Ecuador's president last year as the nation battled unprecedented crime tied to drug trafficking. He declared the country in an "internal armed conflict" in January and designated 20 drug-trafficking gangs as terrorist groups that the military had

authorization to "neutralize" within the bounds of international humanitarian law.

Will Freeman, a fellow of Latin American studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, said the decision to send police to Mexico's embassy raises concerns over the steps Noboa is willing to take to get reelected. His tenure ends in 2025 as he was only elected to finish the term of former President Guillermo Lasso.

"I really hope Noboa is not turning more in a Bukele direction," Freeman said, referring to El Salvador President Nayib Bukele, whose tough-on-crime policies have been heavily criticized by human rights organizations. "That's to say, less respectful of rule of law in order to get a boost to his popularity ahead of the elections."

Freeman added that whether Glas was abusing diplomatic protection is a "separate issue" from the decision to send police to the embassy.

"We see a pattern of that in Latin America with politicians abusing embassies and foreign jurisdictions, not to flee prosecution but to flee accountability," he said.

The Mexican Embassy in Quito remained under heavy police guard after the raid — the boiling point of recent tensions between Mexico and Ecuador.

Vera, Glas' attorney, said she fears "something could happen" to him while in custody considering the track record of the country's detention facilities, where hundreds of people have died during violent riots over the past few years. Those killed while in custody include some suspects in last year's assassination of a presidential candidate.

"In Ecuador, going to jail is practically a death sentence," Vera said. "We consider that the international political and legal person responsible for the life of Jorge Glas is President Daniel Noboa Azín." □



# Today is going to be a good day

(Oranjestad)—Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

## Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website [www.arubanationalpark.org](http://www.arubanationalpark.org)

## Philip's Animal Garden

To stay with the animals, let's hop to an amazing place. Something different to do, an experience that is to be enjoyed by people of all ages. Welcome to Philip's Animal Garden. We are not talking about a zoo here, this is actually a sanctuary for all types of creatures, from horses to peacocks, kangaroos to turtles, monkeys, goats, and many, many more different species. The place was founded in 2009 and it is the only organization rescuing and rehabilitat-



ing exotic animals in Aruba, which has resulted in an amazing collection of these animals. They provide a suitable living environment for all the rescued animals. Up until now the owner, Philip, has built this shelter with his own efforts; building all the cages from scratch, designing all structures and welding them with his own bare hands. His goal is to upgrade the facilities to a world-class animal shelter with veterinary care and round-the-clock staffs. With the input from the Aruban community and visitors they provide the best care for these animals. Please check out their website for more information: [www.philipsanimalgarden.com](http://www.philipsanimalgarden.com).

## The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. [www.arubalighthouse.com](http://www.arubalighthouse.com) will give you more information.

## Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you



are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. It's fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.

Take an "off-road" sightseeing tour

A must-do activity on the island is for sure taking an off-road sightseeing tour. If you have a rented car, you can drive through the northeastern side of Aruba and explore the natural pools, caves, rock formations and gorgeous view of the Atlantic Ocean. To access most of these sights, like the natural pool (Conchi) and the Guadirikiri and Fontein caves, you must enter through the Arikok National Park and buy a day pass. Then you drive up the rugged road that leads you through the white dunes, caves and along the wind turbines. Other locations, like the Ayo and Casibari Rock formation are situated more in the center of the island, and are free for guests, 24 hours a day.

Go for a shopping spree in the city center

Need a new bathing suit? Head to the city center of Oranjestad, where there is countless of different stores—both high end and more affordable—that can offer you the service you deserve! Local shopping stores often offer a more affordable price, and have a variety of clothes, shoes, bathing suites, purses and more. Along the Royal Plaza strip, there are numerous jewelry stores with great quality jewelry. In the Renaissance mall, you can shop high-end luxury brands, like Dolce & Gabbana, Kate Spade, Louis Vuitton and more.

Around the high-rise hotel area near Palm Beach, the Paseo Herencia Mall contain a variety of shopping stores, restaurants, small food stands and even a movie theater!



## Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

According to *Etnia Nativa*, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the

Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, *The History of Alto Vista* by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a



new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are

still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past.



## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Distinguished Visitors of Aruba. These honorees were respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Distinguished Visitors  
Mr. Oliver Trisl & Mrs. Katja Kraus Trisl & Ms. Charlotte Trisl from Naila, Germany.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination, as their home away from home.

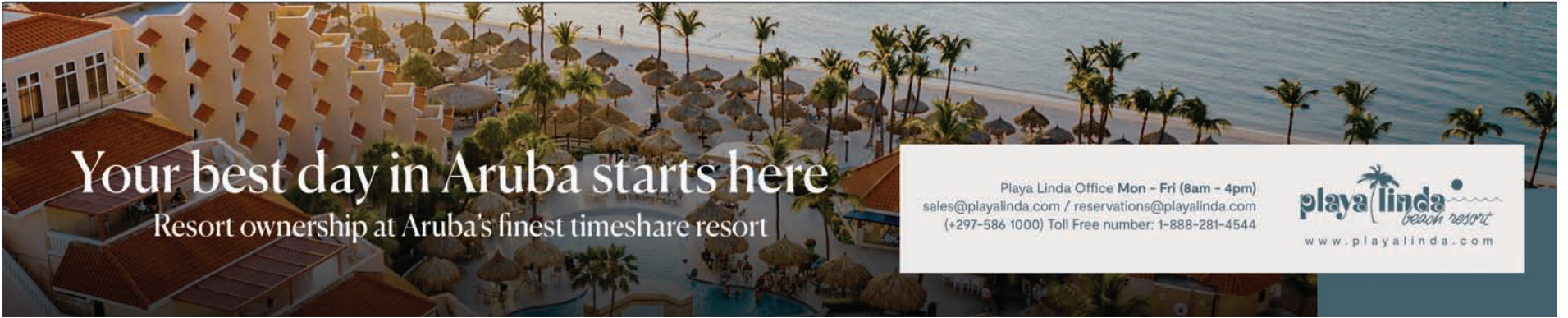
Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's wonderful diving spots.
- Aruba's sun, sand and sea.
- Aruba's shopping options.
- "Sun, Sun, Sun"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".







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## Aruban snacks and where to find them

**ORANJESTAD** — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "kroket," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based



on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including

on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and kroketts at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing "batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack



shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flee markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas,

on the way to Baby Beach.  
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.

3. At the California Light House.

4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them!

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



## Aruba to me

**ORANJESTAD** — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.





## Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

**SAN NICOLAS**— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history  
if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching



stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment.

Carnival Euphoria is showcasing Aruba's Carnival. See how are Carnival has developed over the past 65 years.

The new San Nicolas  
In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more

and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up SunriseCity.

### Must See, Do, Buy & Eat

A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer.



## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Marriott Aruba Ocean Club!

**The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. These honorees were respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.**

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years

consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors  
Mr. Arturo Martinez & Mrs. Angelina Martinez from Lima, Peru.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Marriott Aruba Ocean Club bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination, as their home away from home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba

provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's wonderful weather.
- Aruba's sun, sand and sea.
- Aruba's entertainment.
- "Feel Safe"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".





## The district of Savaneta

### A quick history guide to the island's first capital

**(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.**

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba—and Savaneta—around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who

set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However, Aruba was an exception. He had heard that there were "quebracho" trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805) During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.



In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and business men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said

that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Savaneta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th.

Source: Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta) by Adolf "Dufi" Kock.





## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

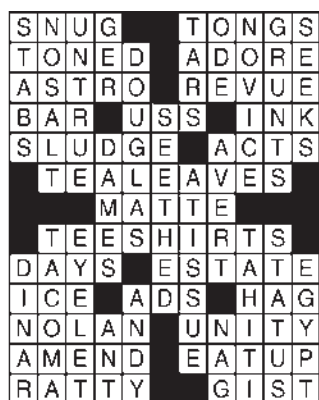
### ACROSS

- 1 Fly high  
5 New York baseball team  
9 On-ramp sign  
10 Furious  
12 Inert gas  
13 Toil away  
14 San Francisco baseball team  
16 John, in Jersey  
17 Quite a few  
18 Los Angeles baseball team  
21 Pacino and Gore  
22 Candy  
23 Sir's counter-part  
24 Trail mix bit  
26 Hockey great Bobby  
29 San Diego baseball team  
30 Region  
31 Yale rooter  
32 Detroit baseball team  
34 Macaroni shape  
37 Return to base

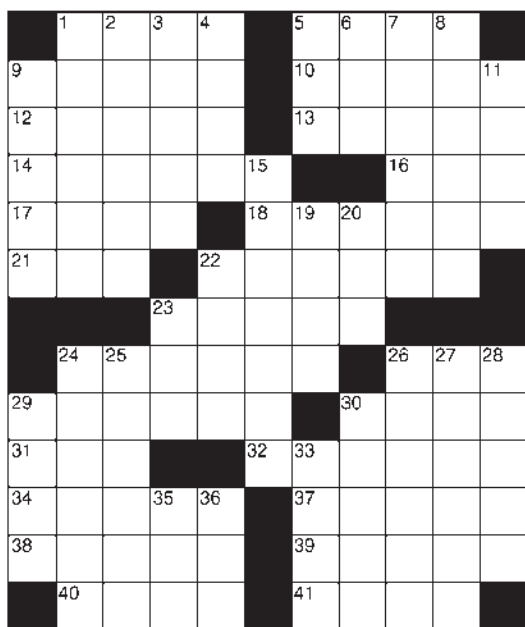
- 38 Esther of TV  
39 Unfeeling  
40 Cincinnati baseball team  
41 Longings

### DOWN

- 1 Continuing story  
2 Livers and spleens  
3 Extreme pain  
4 Monthly bill  
5 End for Army URLs  
6 Pitching stat  
7 Laptop's kin  
8 Bar seats  
9 Molten rock  
11 Amorous archer  
15 Wood shop sweepings  
19 Tidy  
20 Ruby or garnet  
22 Rational  
23 Spoil  
24 Lack of color  
25 Fit for consumption  
26 Mount Hood's state  
27 Some summer TV  
28 Hoarse  
29 Jury member  
30 Banded quartz  
33 Wee  
35 Ancient  
36 Director Anderson



Saturday's answer



4-8

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-8

### CRYPTOQUOTE

DNW AZQ SA MIQW, JZD S

NTUW T KSMND. — EZYD

VIJTSQ

Saturday's Cryptoquote: HAPPINESS IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF PROBLEMS; IT'S THE ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THEM. — STEVE MARABOLI

## Cruise ship Schedule: Apr 8 - Apr 14 2024

TUE	09	SYMPHONY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	I	1
WED	10	CARNIVAL MAGIC	07.00	15.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN PRIMA	10.00	20.00	C	1
		MARELLA VOYAGER	08.00	20.00	I	1
THU	11	MSC DIVINA	07.00	14.00	B	1
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	18.00	C	1
FRI	12	CARNIVAL PRIDE	09.00	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	10.00	20.00	I	1
SAT	13	NORWEGIAN JADE	07.00	20.00	C	1
TUE	16	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	17	ODYSSEY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
SAT	20	NORWEGIAN PRIMA	10.00	19.00	C	1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours  
Supermarket hours may



vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

### Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

### Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7



# Small town businesses embrace total solar eclipse crowd, come rain or shine on Monday

By **MARCIA DUNN**  
AP Aerospace Writer  
**WAXAHACHIE, Texas (AP)**

— The last time a total solar eclipse passed through this Texas town, horses and buggies filled the streets and cotton fetched 9 cents a pound. Nearly 150 years later, one thing hasn't changed: the threat of clouds blocking the view. Overcast skies are forecast for Monday's cosmic wonder across Texas, already packing in eclipse chasers to the delight of small town businesses.

As the moon covers the sun, daytime darkness will follow a narrow corridor — from Mexico's Pacific coast to Texas and 14 other states all the way to Maine and the eastern fringes of Canada. The best U.S. forecast: northern New England.

Like other communities along the path of totality, Waxahachie, a half-hour's drive south of Dallas, is pulling out all the stops with a weekend full of concerts and other festivities.

It's the region's first total solar eclipse since 1878. The next one won't be for almost another 300 years.

"I feel so lucky that I don't have to go anywhere," the Ellis County Museum's Suzanne Pylant said Saturday as she welcomed visitors in town for the eclipse. "I get to just look out my window, walk out my door and look up."

She's praying the weather will cooperate, as are the owners of all the shops clustered around the historic courthouse made of red sandstone and pink granite in the center of town. They're bracing for a few hundred thousand visitors for Monday's 4 minutes, 20 seconds of totality, close to the maximum of 4 minutes, 28 seconds elsewhere on the path.

The Oily Bar Soapery is hosting a Bubble Black-out all weekend, with eclipse-themed soaps and giveaways. Among the handmade soaps: "Luna," "Solar Power," "Mother Earth" and "Hachie Eclipse of the Heart."



**Kalee Hume stands alongside her handmade eclipse-themed soaps at her shop in downtown Waxahachie, Texas, on Saturday, April 6, 2024.**

Associated Press

The next one is centuries away "so we figured we'd go all out," explained owner Kalee Hume.

Nazir Moosa, who owns the Celebrity Cafe and Bakery, winced when he heard the weather report, but noted: "It's weather. You can't control it."

North of Austin, Williamson County residents hope the eclipse puts the area's new park on the map. The River Ranch County Park, which opened in July on the outskirts of the city of Liberty Hill, is sold out and ready to host hundreds on Monday. "It still has that new park smell," said Sam Gibson, the park's assistant office administrator.

Stacie Kenyon is inviting people to watch the eclipse from her Main Street Marketplace in the heart of Liberty Hill's historic downtown — and escape inside the boutique if it rains.

"We were really hopeful, but now with this weather it is kind of a bummer," Kenyon said. "We will just have to wait and see."

In Waxahachie, there's a sense of deja vu around the town of 45,000 residents. A banner in the museum's front window, displaying newspaper headlines from the July 29, 1878, eclipse, detailed the cloudy skies all morning. But just before the moon lined up between the sun and Earth that af-

ternoon, the sky cleared. Visiting from Campbell, California, Ed Yuhara studied weather patterns before settling on northern Texas to view the eclipse with his wife, Paula, and a few friends. "It turns out it will be the exact opposite," he said while touring the museum.

He was in Oregon for October's "ring of fire" solar eclipse, but got rained out. Rain or shine, the Yuharas and friend Liz Gibbons plan on celebrating. "It's a visual and physical experience and at my age, which is 75, I will never see one again," Gibbons said.

Totality won't sweep across the U.S. like this again until 2045, sidestepping almost all of Texas.

"It just blows me away," Moosa said as he served up a large breakfast crowd. "The hotels rooms are booked and everything else ... it's very good news for Waxahachie." □



**Editor**  
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.  
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668  
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.  
Acc. #23951903  
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

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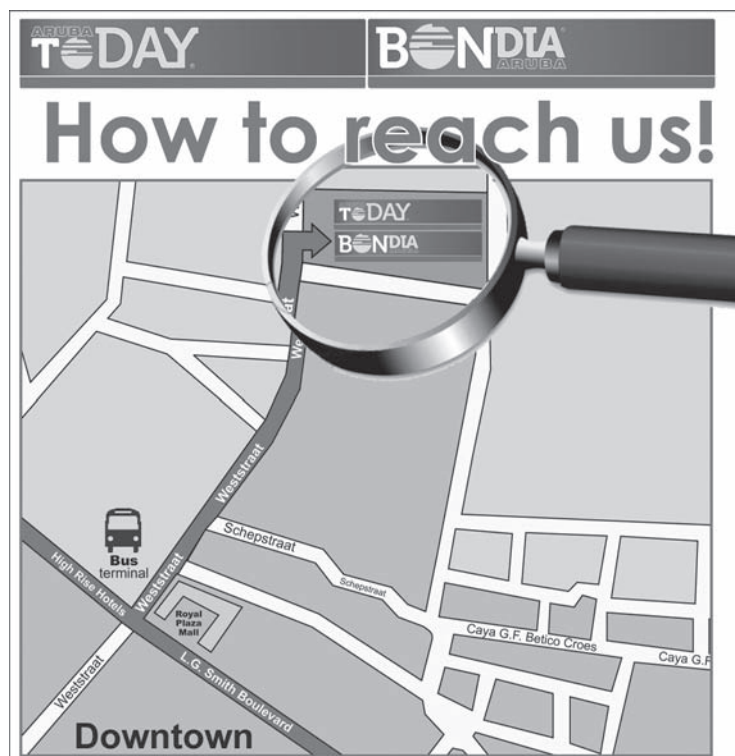
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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
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Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
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# South Carolina finishes perfect season with NCAA championship, beating Clark and Iowa 87-75

By **DOUG FEINBERG**  
AP Basketball Writer

**CLEVELAND (AP)** — Dawn Staley and South Carolina completed their perfect season, ending Caitlin Clark's historic college career with an 87-75 win over Iowa in the NCAA championship game Sunday. With Staley directing a relentless attack from the sideline, the Gamecocks (38-0) became the 10th Division I team to go through a season without a loss. And they accomplished the feat after they lost all five starters from last season's team that lost to Clark's squad in the national semifinals.

"It doesn't always end like you want it to end, much like last year. But my freshies are at the top of my heart because they wanted this. It's awesome. .... It's awesome. It's awesome. It's unbelievable," Staley said. "When young people lock in and have a belief, and have a trust, and their parents have that same trust, this is what can happen. They made history. They etched their names in the history books."

Clark did all she could to lead the Hawkeyes to their first championship. She



South Carolina players and coach celebrate after the Final Four college basketball championship game against Iowa in the women's NCAA Tournament, Sunday, April 7, 2024, in Cleveland.

Associated Press

scored 30 points, including a championship-record 18 in the first quarter. She will go down as one of the greatest players in NCAA history. She rewrote the record book at Iowa (34-5), finishing as the career leading scorer in NCAA Division I history with 3,951 career points.

She hopes her legacy isn't defined by falling short in two NCAA championship games, but more by the millions of new fans she helped bring into the game and the countless young girls and boys that she inspired.

"I think the biggest thing is

it's really hard to win these things, I think I know that better than most people by now, to be so close twice really hurts," Clark said.

As the final buzzer sounded, a stoic Clark walked off the court, through the confetti, and into the tunnel heading to the locker room.

"I personally want to thank Caitlin Clark for lifting up our sport. She carried a heavy load for our sport," Staley said. "She's going to lift that league (WNBA) up as well. Caitlin Clark if you're out there you're one of the GOATs of our game. We appreciate you."

South Carolina has won

three titles in the last eight years, including two of the past three, to lay claim to being the latest dynasty in women's basketball. Staley became the fifth coach to win at least three national championships, joining Geno Auriemma, Pat Summitt, Kim Mulkey and Tara VanDerveer.

The Gamecocks, who have won 109 of their last 112 games, became the first team since UConn in 2016 to go undefeated. South Carolina had a couple scares throughout the season, but always found a way to win.

With most of the team returning next year — except for star center Kamilla Cardoso — Staley's team is in a good position to keep this run going.

Tessa Johnson led South Carolina with 19 points. Cardoso, the NCAA tournament's Most Outstanding Player, had 15 points and 17 rebounds.

"Kamilla Cardoso was not going to let us lose a game in the NCAA Tournament," Staley said. "She played through an injury, she played like one of the top picks in the WNBA draft, and her teammates did something that no

teammates have done for somebody who went to the WNBA in our program. They send her off as a national champion. So this is history for us."

Led by the 6-foot-7 Cardoso and Ashlyn Watkins, South Carolina enjoyed a 51-29 rebounding advantage. It also finished with 30 second-chance points.

The Gamecocks also showed off their impressive depth. Johnson helped the team to a 37-0 difference in points by reserves.

South Carolina trailed 46-44 late in the second quarter before going on an 11-0 run spanning halftime to open a 55-46 advantage early in the third quarter. Clark finally ended the run with a layup.

The Hawkeyes closed to 59-55 and had a chance to get even closer, but Hannah Stuelke missed a wide-open layup on a brilliant pass from Clark.

South Carolina responded with the next eight points, including two 3-pointers. The Gamecocks, who were 4 for 20 from behind the 3-point line during last season's Final Four loss to Iowa, went 8 for 19 from deep against the Hawkeyes this time around. □

# Van der Poel produces dominant performance to win Paris-Roubaix for 2nd straight year

**ROUBAIX, France (AP)** — Dutch cycling star Mathieu Van der Poel broke away with 60 kilometers (37 miles) remaining to win the Paris-Roubaix cycling classic for the second straight year with a dominant performance on Sunday.

With his archrival Wout van Aert recovering from multiple injuries sustained at the Dwars door Vlaanderen race in late March, Van der Poel dominated the grueling 260 kilometer (161-mile) trek from its start in Compiègne to Roubaix in northern France.

When he attacked with 60 kilometers to go, his rivals simply could not catch him in dry conditions which

made the 29 cobblestone sections less treacherous.

Entering the Velodrome at Roubaix, the world road race champion was around three minutes clear and could milk the applause from the crowd.

"I could never have dreamed of this as a child. I'm a bit lost for words, really, but I'll just try to enjoy this moment," Van der Poel said. "My legs felt incredible today."

He eased back on his bike and raised his arms slowly in the air as he crossed the line in 5 hours, 25 minutes, 58 seconds.

"It's hard to believe actually, I was maybe even stronger than last year," he said.



Netherlands' Mathieu van der Poel celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the men's Paris Roubaix, a 260 kilometer (162 miles) one-day-race, at the velodrome in Roubaix, northern France, Sunday, April 7, 2024.

Associated Press

"I had a really good day today."

Belgian rider Jasper Philipsen — his Alpecin-De-

ceuninck teammate — was in second place after beating Dane Mads Pedersen in a sprint to the line. They

were three minutes behind Van der Poel.

Paris-Roubaix is one of the five "monuments" in one-day cycling with the Tour of Flanders, Liège-Bastogne-Liège, the Tour of Lombardy and Milan-San Remo. The 29-year-old Van der Poel has now won a total of six monuments overall but has yet to win Liège and Lombardy.

At the halfway point on Sunday, most of the favorites were still near Van der Poel.

But British rider Josh Taring was ejected by the race jury, after getting a long pull from his Ineos Grenadiers team car to regain position following a puncture. □



# Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg, the 2019 World Series MVP, announces his retirement at 35

By PATRICK STEVENS

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Washington Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg announced his retirement Sunday, ending the 2019 World Series MVP's injury-filled career.

Since leading Washington to its only World Series title five years ago, the 35-year-old Strasburg pitched just 31 1/3 innings over eight starts.

"I realized after repeated attempts to return to pitching, injuries no longer allow me to perform at a major league level," Strasburg said in a statement. His retirement had been listed on Major League Baseball's transaction page Saturday. General manager Mike Rizzo, who selected Strasburg with the No. 1 overall pick of the 2009 amateur draft, said the right-hander was on "the Mount Rushmore of the Nationals."

"When he was on the mound, he was as good as any pitcher in baseball — ever," Rizzo said Sunday before the Nationals played the Phillies. "Unfortunately for him and for us, it wasn't as we wanted it to be."

Strasburg was 113-62 with a 3.24 ERA over 13 seasons and made three All-Star appearances. He led the National League with 18 victories in 2019 and then delivered a dominant post-season, going 5-0 with a 1.98 ERA over six appearances. That included wins in Games 2 and 6 of the World Series in Houston.

He signed a \$245 million, seven-year contract in December 2019 but threw only 528 pitches over 31 1/3 innings in the majors after that, going 1-4 with a 6.89 ERA. He had surgery for thoracic outlet syndrome, a nerve and blood disorder that led to the removal of a rib and two neck muscles. Strasburg has not pitched since June 9, 2022, when he lasted 4 2/3 innings in his lone start of the season before going back on the injured list. He did not report for spring training in 2023 or 2024.



Washington Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg throws live batting practice in a drizzle during the team's spring training baseball workout March 15, 2022, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

"You just feel for somebody like that who was such a good player for a long time," said Washington pitcher Patrick Corbin, who signed with the Nationals before the 2019 season in part to join a rotation that

included Strasburg. "It's just unfortunate with the injuries and some setbacks. He tried everything to come back and be part of this team and things just didn't work out."

Washington started plan-

ning for a retirement news conference last August but didn't call for one as Strasburg and the Nationals discussed restructuring his contract. The deal called for him to receive \$35 million annually, with \$11,428,571 a year deferred at 1% interest. The deferred money was payable in equal installments of \$26,666,667 on July 1 in 2027, 2028 and 2029, with an interest payment of \$3,999,974 on Dec. 31, 2029.

Strasburg was viewed as a franchise cornerstone when Washington drafted him. He arrived in the majors almost exactly a year later, when he struck out 14 in a debut against Pittsburgh on June 8, 2010, in a performance that was quickly

dubbed "Strasmas."

Within three months, Strasburg underwent Tommy John surgery and was lost for most of the 2011 season. The Nationals shut him down late in the 2012 season, and criticism of the team was amplified when it lost to St. Louis in the NL Division Series.

Strasburg threw 150 regular-season innings five times, including a NL-high 209 in 2019. That was before he struck out 47 over 36 1/3 innings that October.

"He was a horse out there on the mound," Washington manager Dave Martinez said. "Not every day he felt good, but every five days he'd take the ball and give you everything he had no matter what." □



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watering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp. You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one



of the most exclusive wine from the great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

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If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

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Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

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Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all through 2021, and hopefully will continue to do so in 2022. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, very to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon!

